

South Denali State Park Planning and Design - Phase 1**FY2008 Request:****\$1,000,000****Reference No:****42887****AP/AL:** Appropriation**Project Type:** Planning**Category:** Development**Location:** Matanuska-Susitna Borough (Rural Mat-Su)**Contact:** Nico Bus**House District:** Rural Mat-Su**Contact Phone:** (907)465-2406**Estimated Project Dates:** 07/01/2007 - 06/30/2008**Brief Summary and Statement of Need:**

This project will start the planning and design of a South Denali Park visitor center complex with trails and amenities on Curry Ridge in Denali State Park, which will provide additional recreational opportunities for visitors and residents. Access roads, campgrounds, trails and waysides are also part of this multi-year project.

Funding:	FY2008	FY2009	FY2010	FY2011	FY2012	FY2013	Total
Fed Rcpts	\$1,000,000	\$1,100,000	\$2,200,000	\$550,000			\$4,850,000
Total:	\$1,000,000	\$1,100,000	\$2,200,000	\$550,000	\$0	\$0	\$4,850,000

<input type="checkbox"/> State Match Required	<input type="checkbox"/> One-Time Project	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Phased - new	<input type="checkbox"/> Phased - underway	<input type="checkbox"/> On-Going
0% = Minimum State Match % Required		<input type="checkbox"/> Amendment	<input type="checkbox"/> Mental Health Bill	

Operating & Maintenance Costs:

	<u>Amount</u>	<u>Staff</u>
Project Development:	0	0
Ongoing Operating:	0	0
One-Time Startup:	0	
Totals:	0	0

Additional Information / Prior Funding History:

This is a new project request.

Project Description/Justification:

South Denali is a planning project with a 30+ year history. The latest effort is progressing well based on thorough planning and inclusion of public and commercial input. We have a unified support base for the project.

At Mile 135 of the Parks Highway a base facility containing a parking/circulation area, campground, transit station, power station, restrooms, a visitor contact station and ranger residence would be designed and constructed, and connected to Curry Ridge in Denali State Parks via a new road with paralleling hiking trails. The road accesses a visitor center with a world class view, and includes visitor contact, interpretation, food service, theater, power generation and restrooms. Building design would employ sustainable design standards and consider innovative construction and placement techniques to lessen operations and maintenance costs. Concession opportunities would be maximized to offset operation and maintenance cost and lessen the need for user fees.

Trails would be laid out and constructed to access scenic vistas outside of the Visitor Center and give participants easily accessible opportunities to enjoy a tundra setting. Trails would link Curry Ridge with Kesugi Ridge to give many miles of hiking, and wildlife and glacier viewing. Designated camp sites, and public use cabins would provide sustainable overnight locations for trail users. From Curry Ridge a trail could be re-established linking it with the Alaska Railroad site at Curry on the Susitna River. A suspension bridge or tram would enable hikers to cross the river, visit the abandoned town site of Curry and then access the Alaska Railroad or a riverboat service for travel north or south.

Shuttle buses that are used to access the visitor center could also be used for transportation to rafting, wildlife viewing, hotel and other visitor services.

Why is this Project Needed Now:

The public need for additional recreational access in the South Denali area is growing exponentially. This facility and its associated amenities would provide a long term solution to this access need. The public process defined a visitor center on Curry Ridge and Parks Highway associated amenities as a priority needed now.

Specific Spending Detail:

Line Item Expenditures:

Personal Services \$223.0	Planning, designing, contractor monitoring, environmental assessment
Travel \$19.5	Travel for above activities
Services \$628.0	Contracts
Commodities \$19.5	Materials needed for above activities
Capital Outlay \$110.0	Equipment needed for above activities

Project Support:

National Park Service, Matanuska Susitna Borough, State of Alaska, Alaska Railroad, Cook Inlet Regional Corporation, Alaska Tourism Industry Association, local communities and general public.

Project Opposition:

Through the public process of the South Denali Implementation Plan, minor opposition was encountered. The subject of opposition is addressed in the Record of Decision for this project.